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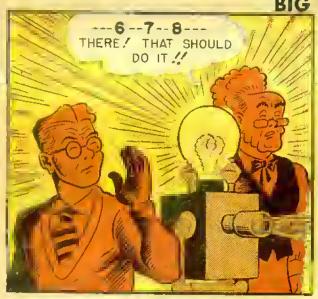












































EME EMETA

By McEVOY and STRIEBEL

JIM
BRADLEY
HAD
SECRETLY
BEEN
REHEARSING
DIXIE FOR
THE LEAD
IN HIS
NEW PLAY
BUT HE
NEVER
INTENDED
TO USE
HER.



























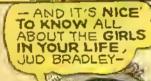






































DIXIE
DUGAN
APPEARS
IN
EVERY
ISSUE
OF
BIG
SHOT

MICKEY FINN

By Lank Leonard



THEY'LL BE RIDING HI-HE TOOK THE
US NEXT, MICKEY!
AS SHERIFF, PHIL IS
HEAD OF ALL LAW
ENFORCEMENT IN THIS
COUNTRY.
HE TODAY?
HE TODAY?





















IT IS NOW LONG
PAST NOON
AND
UNCLE PHIL
HAS NOT YET
RETURNED
FROM HIS
DRIVE IN THE
COUNTRY
WITH THE

CHILDREN.

























BIG SHOT

C-CARS! T-THEY
MUST BE THE ONES
THAT GANG HAS BEEN
STEALIN!

UNCLE PHIL
MAKES A
STARTLING
DISCOVERY!





























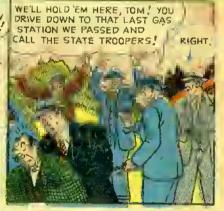








JUMP EM FAST!









BRASS KWUCKLES MARTY







































"I Wonder What's Become of -"

By MART BAILEY

GOOD OLD BUMPY was both disappointed and perplexed. The evening newspapers carried no account of Jack Beerymore's sudden departure for the Other World. There was only a brief paragraph, appropriately near the obituaries, which mentioned the continued absence of the popular actor, who had vanished three days before, on the opening night of his latest play.

Good Old Bumpy had expected to read that the body had been found in a sewer or a sack or wherever the cognoscenti hide such matters that might involve them with the Police.

For that Jack Beerymore was now numbered among the Faithful Departed, Good Old Bumpy was certain, because on the very night of Jack's disappearance a revolver was emptied upon their mutual friend, Don Gilholy. You will remember that Don Gilholy's Broadway column had recently stirred the ire of the Underworld; and to this, Good Old Bumpy ascribed this subsequent violence. The bullets frightened eight lives of a tomcat sleeping in a geranium bed, and missed the columnist, who was just leaving for the theater. But Good Old Bumpy feared that Jack Beerymore had been less fortunate.

It, was, decided the red-haired young man with the enormous brow and the large, bumpy nose, an occasion when a fellow needed a Genalo Paradise Fizz to comfort his distraught soul. And since the lanky form that housed his distraught soul was already cramped into one of the tight little wooden booths of Genalo's Paradise Grill, he pressed the buzzer for service.

At the moment, however, Apollo, the sourpussed gorilla who tended to the spiritual needs of Mr. Genalo's customers, was otherwise engaged. A scarecrowish hunchback, whose matted red hair framed a nightmarish face, had gained admittance by following at the heels of a more respectable customer; and Apollo was now forcefully ejecting him.

When he had ousted the scarecrow, however, Apollo suddenly relented and gruffly asked what he wanted. The hunchback, displaying a pair of antique collar buttons, mumbled something about unemployment and seven children. Two big tears rivuleted down Apollo's simian countenance. With a grandiose gesture, Apollo handed the unfortunate a quarter and gave him permission to try his luck with the customers.

Seemingly stunned by this unexpected generosity, the hunchback collected a few dimes.

from the foggy-eyed men who stood at the bar. Upon coming face to face with Butsy Ratsoff, Benny Ratsoff's baby brother, he staggered in his tracks, but the short, thickset underworldling attributed this reaction to palsy and doubled his contribution. The hunchback lost no time, however, in shuffling towards the booth where Good Old Bumpy sat.

The lanky young man with the bumpy nose groped instinctively for his wallet. Snatching the twenty-dollar bill which Good Old Bumpy automatically extended, the nightmarish beggar whispered in a cackling voice: "Don't get that Alice in Wonderland look in your piggish eyes. Jack Beerymore sent me. Come quickly to 711 West Ache Street. And bring two charcoal steak dinners with a side dish of roast duck and a bottle of Genalo's Paradise Fizz."

Despite himself, Good Old Bumpy could feel the Alice in Wonderland look creeping into his porcine blue eyes as he realized that Jack Beerymore was alive and wanted his help.

A short yelp snapped his reverie, and he saw the hunchback scurrying towards the door. The next instant a terrific slam told that the beggar had gone. And the most astonished person in Genalo's Paradise Grill was Butsy Ratsoff, who had just taken out his .44 automatic pistol to explain to Apollo the intricacies of the gunmaker's art.

711 WEST ACHE STREET was a five-story pile of dirty red bricks, fire escapes, and garbage cans.

Good Old Bumpy, hearing the scrape of stumbling feet as he climbed the iron bannistered stoop, glanced over his shoulder and saw the hunchback coming up the steps, his bloated lips stretched over doggish teeth in what was meant for a friendly greeting.

Without a word, the beggar gripped Good Old Bumpy's wrist in a clawlike hand and hurried him up five flights of creaking stairs through a solid mass of stale cooking odors to a leprous looking door, which he opened with a jangling bunch of keys. Furtively, the hunchback darted inside the dark room and pulled the shade down over the single window.

The unshaded light which the nightmarish man pulled on showed the room to be small, dirty, and disordered. The flowered wallpaper had hung in tatters since about 1918; clothing

was strewn upon the solitary chair and across the patch quilt that covered the iron bed. From under an untidy bureau peeped a huge, battered trunk.

The hunchback turned with another horrible grin and, pushing his guest aside, bolted and rebolted the door.

Good Old Bumpy felt as if he had been thrust into an especially morbid melodrama. He suspected that the body of his actor friend had been stuffed into the battered trunk under the bureau.

"Where's Mr. Beerymore?" he demanded with a frown.

The hunchback jumped nervously. "Sh!" he hissed, his nightmarish face pale beneath its filth. "Don't talk so loud! Tell me, were you followed?"

"Followed? No, I don't think so. But where's-"

The nightmare chuckled and performed a miracle. The monstrous teeth, the John L. Lewis brows, the matted red hair sailed onto the bed; the ragged coat slipped to the floor, and the beggar's fingers worked over the straps that bound an artificial hunch to his back.

Good Old Bumpy stared.

Jack Beerymore, the missing actor, stood grinning before him.

"I knew you all the time," said Good Old

Bumpy.

The actor stopped wiping the grime off his

face. "No!"

Good Old Bumpy lighted a cigaret and nonchalantly exhaled the first geyser of smoke. "Positively did."

"But how?"

"That hair. Impossible color."

"It's the exact shade of your own!" retorted the actor, his pride outraged, because his genius for disguise was one of his most cherished accomplishments.

Good Old Bumpy shrugged. "I wasn't the

only one who recognized you."

"You mean Butsy Ratsoff knew it was I?"

"Butsy Ratsoff? Was that-"

"Yes. Benny Ratsoff's brother, who succeeded him in the Underworld... Do you think he knew me?"

"He drew his pistol for the coup-de-grace, so

to speak, didn't he?"

Jack Beerymore groaned. "You must help me!" He grasped the lapels of his friend's coat. "You got me into this mess!"

Good Old Pumpy lifted his eyebrows, "You're

nerts! Stark, raving nerts!"

"I'm not. You introduced me to Benny Ratsofi as Limehouse Louey, a British trigger-man, who went around with a sign, 'This Gun for Hire. Reasonable Rates, hanging from my .44."

"You wanted money to save your play, didn't

уоц?"

"Sure. But I didn't want to get mixed up with the Underworld. Remember that envelope addressed to Limehouse Louey and containing thirty thousand dollars which arrived at Jerry Swancourt's place a couple of days after the Fourth of July, after we scared Benny Ratsoff and his mob by setting off the firecrackers and stuff? You ought to, because you kept ten thousand dollars for yourself as commission."

Good Old Bumpy shrugged the matter aside

as negligible.

"Well," continued the actor, "Benny Ratsoff expected me to earn that money."

"He did!"

Jack Beerymore nodded, his classic features a mournful mask.

"You mean he actually expected you to bump off our chum Don Gilholy?"

Again the doctor nodded.

"Wait till Don hears this!" Good Old Bumpy chuckled. "But what has that to do with your disappearance? Benny is honeymooning somewhere in South America.

"I know. But his little baby brother with the pearl-handled machine guns is still here." The actor slumped on the bed and began moodily chewing on one of the charcoal steak dinners which Good Old Bumpy had brought along. "A week after I received the envelope, Butsy came to Plurtotles Manor, Jerry Swancourt's place, and told me that his big brother Benny was dissatisfied with my delay. He said if I didn't fulfill my part of the contract soon, I'd go for a oneway ride myself. I'd have confessed and given back the money; but the money was already spent, and there was a mean look in Butsy's baby blue eyes that indicated he would not react favorably should he discover it had all been a joke. So I kept quiet, and agreed to live up to your recommendation. You said I was a trigger-man extraordinary, remember?"

"I did?" Good Old Bumpy laughed softly. "That's funny."

Jack Beerymore scowled. "I phoned my managers to change the name of the play and the name of the principal character, so as to obliterate forever "Limehouse Louey." Everything went all right for another week, until Butsy and two gorilla chums called again at Plurtotles. This time I was in New York, but Jerry, knowing nothing of my circumstances, gave them my address. They arrived at my place just as I was about to leave for the theater. They said that I had to keep my bargain that night, and insisted upon trailing along—to get a few pointers from a real trigger artist."

Good Old Bumpy whistled. "So it was you

who fired upon Don Gilholy?"

"Yes" replied the actor the

"Yes," replied the actor through a mouthful of charcoal steak and French fried potatoes. "But I didn't mean to shoot him." He looked up from the cardboard plate on his knees and, his eyes shining, inquired eagerly, "Did I?"

























































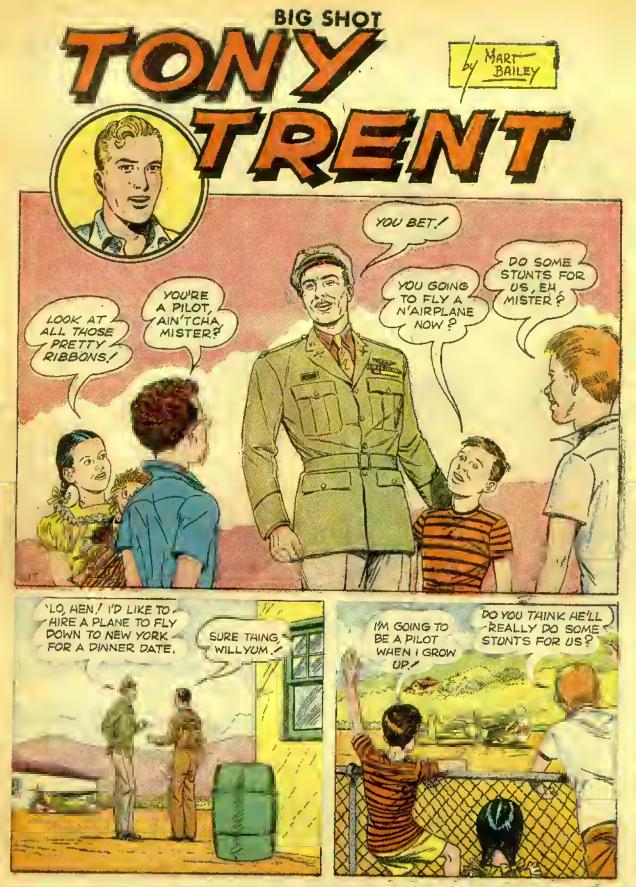






























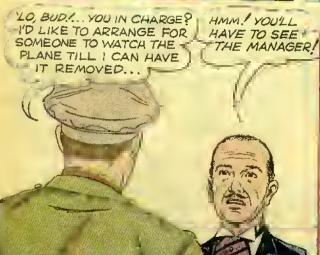
































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